

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 08001219      Date Listed: 12/26/2008

<u>Beck, Alice Cabin</u>	<u>Flathead</u>	<u>MT</u>
Property Name	County	State

Recreational Camps on Lake McDonald, 1892-1970 MPS  
Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

	<u>12/26/2008</u>
Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Certification:

The documentation was submitted by the nominating authority as a "nomination."  
[The certification block on the nomination form was inadvertently left blank and has now been corrected.]

Classification:

The non-contributing garage should be reclassified as a *non-contributing building*.

Significance:

The *Cultural Affiliation* box should be left vacant and "European-American" deleted.  
[The cultural affiliation refers only to properties listed under Criterion D.]

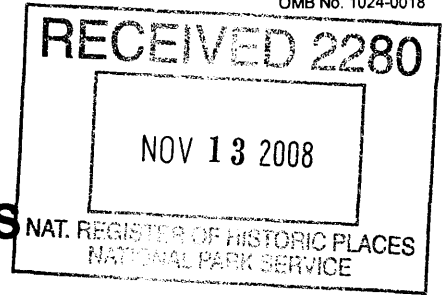
These clarifications were confirmed with the NPS FPO & MT SHPO Office.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1219



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Alice Beck Cabin

other name/site number: John T. Robinson Cabin

2. Location

street & number: S of Kelly's Camp Rd, E of McDonald Ck; Glacier National Park

city/town: Lake McDonald

not for publication:  
vicinity:

state: Montana code: MT county: Flathead code: 029 zip code: 59921

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark F. Paunier / SHPO  
Signature of certifying official/Title

6/5/2008  
Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

Robert J. Mitten  
Signature of commenting or other official

11/13/08  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  
see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register  
see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register  
see continuation sheet
- other (explain)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

12/26/2008

## 5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private	Number of Resources within Property 2		
	Contributing	Non-contributing	
Category of Property: Building			
Number of contributing resources previously listed In the National Register: 0	1		building(s) site(s)
Name of related multiple property listing: Recreational Camps on Lake McDonald, 1892-1970	1	1	structure(s) objects(s)  TOTAL

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:	Current Function:
DOMESTIC: Camp	DOMESTIC: Camp

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification:	MATERIALS:
OTHER: Rustic Style	<b>Foundation:</b> log, concrete
	<b>Walls:</b> log, frame
	<b>Roof:</b> cedar shakes, asphalt shingles
	<b>Other:</b>

## Narrative Description:

The Alice Beck Cabin is a summer recreational camp located on a 75 x 100-foot lot on the east shore of Lake McDonald about 800 feet south of the McDonald Creek inlet in Glacier National Park in Flathead County, Montana. The camp is reached by a quarter-mile-long drive paralleling the inlet and connecting the property with the North Lake McDonald Road. The road passes through mixed conifer woods to a wide, level area where the cabin and its associated garage stand on an open lawn overlooking the north end of the lake. The cabin has an unobstructed view from its pebble beach to the lake's opposite shore.

**Main cabin** (ca.1910, contributing): The main cabin is a one-and-a-half-story, frontal gable cabin built of peeled and stained notched logs daubed with clay. A screened porch with log knee walls is set under the extended gabled roof and spans the front of the main block, overlooking the lake. The main block retains its fenestration plan dating to the cabin's construction with factory-made, double-hung, multi-light sash in the north and west elevations (those not covered by later additions). The roof is covered with an unusual corrugated aluminum roofing.

The cabin was renovated in the 1940s and also has later frame additions on the south (1965) and back (ca.1975) sides. The south addition is cross-gabled into the main roof and is sheathed in board-and-batten siding. The later back addition continues the height and roofline of the main block to the addition's back wall. It is sheathed in wood clapboard siding.

The main room of the interior is located at the west, or front, of the cabin. Behind this, in the northeast corner is small kitchen. A sleeping loft spans the back of the wall of the original cabin. The later additions provided bedrooms for extended family as the second and third generations shared the cabin during the season.

**Garage** (ca.1980, non-contributing): The garage is a two-bay, frontal gable, frame building plywood siding and simple, vertically sliding doors.

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria:** A and C

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):** n/a

**Significant Person(s):**

**Cultural Affiliation:** European-American

**Areas of Significance:** Entertainment/Recreation;  
Architecture

**Period(s) of Significance:** ca.1910-1957

**Significant Dates:**

**Architect/Builder:** unknown

## Narrative Statement of Significance

The Alice Beck Cabin is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The cabin is a representative example of a recreational seasonal camp on Lake McDonald in Glacier National Park, Flathead County, Montana. The Glacier National Park Multiple Property Document (MPD) for "Recreational Camps on Lake McDonald, 1895-1970" provides the historic context for the development of such wilderness recreational properties. The cabin's small lot was originally part of the Denis Comeau Homestead, one of six patented homesteads on Lake McDonald. The homesteaders followed a pattern of subdividing their lands, selling off lots for recreational cabin development. The MPD also describes the architecture associated with such properties on Lake McDonald. The cabin is an early example of a recreational cabin on Lake McDonald and retains integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling dating to that period. The cabin typifies the rustic camps built in the early twentieth century with its modest size and details reminiscent of the Craftsman-style bungalows popular at the time. Like most family-owned camps around Lake McDonald, the property has changed hands infrequently.

## Summary History of Development

The Alice Beck Cabin property was platted and sold by Denis and Lydia M. Comeau to John J. Robinson for \$250 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1905.<sup>1</sup> Denis Comeau had claimed a 164.08-acre homestead in the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 14 in the Township 33 North, Range 18 West, on the east shore, near the head of Lake McDonald, in the mid-1890s. Comeau, who worked winters as a sawyer in local mills, met Lydia Wing Cruger there about 1898, where she ran a boarding house called the Valley House. Mrs. Cruger was a widow with three adolescent children—Edward, Ida, and Ruth—when she and Comeau married about 1900. She had lived in Michigan and Ohio before coming to Montana about 1892. Denis Comeau was an Acadian from Nova Scotia, who had also worked his way west.<sup>2</sup>

See continuation pages for Section 8

<sup>1</sup> *Book of Deeds 107/63*. Flathead County Clerk and Records Office, Kalispell, Montana.

<sup>2</sup> Thelma Powell, Interview by author, 24 July 2005.

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Until their divorce in 1907 or 1908, the Comeaus kept their homestead largely intact, except for the sale of this 75 x 100-foot lakefront parcel to John Robinson made before the homestead patent was issued on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1906. At three dollars per lake front foot, the value of the property matches what George Snyder, who owned the Glacier House hotel on the point, anticipated getting for building lots he planned to sell in 1906. The Comeaus and John T. Robinson both lived in Columbia Falls at the time of the transaction.<sup>3</sup> A “Jack” Robinson worked as a night clerk at the Gaylord Hotel,<sup>4</sup> owned by John E. Lewis. Much later, however, Lydia Comeau would call the man who bought the parcel “Dr.” Robinson.<sup>5</sup> The Fox family, who have owned the property since 1950, believe that selling the lot might have paid a doctor’s bill.<sup>6</sup> Only a little later, Lydia Comeau sold a parcel south of the homestead cabins to Dora Crump to pay for her son’s hospitalization<sup>7</sup>, suggesting that the Comeaus’ best source of ready cash during medical crisis was land. Denis Comeau sold the property surrounding this parcel to Olive Lewis, wife of John E. Lewis, in 1908, about the time he departed for British Columbia and soon after the divorce.<sup>8</sup>

Lydia Comeau acquired the southern two thirds of the homestead, and by 1910, she had platted additional small shoreline lots for sale to seasonal visitors. All of these parcels were south of the homestead cabins located near the center of the property’s shore line. They varied in size from 50 to 210 feet of shoreline; depths also varied as the road, which forms the back line of lots platted from about 1920 on, was not yet planned. In addition, each of the Cruger children received a one-acre (210 feet x 210 feet) parcel with shoreline in the southern third of the property.<sup>9</sup> Roughly ten lots were divided off the property by the early 1910s. As the Transmountain Highway, now called the Going-to-the-Sun Road, was surveyed in the late 1910s and passed through the Comeau homestead in the early 1920s, Comeau and her son Edward Cruger laid out a few additional 50-foot shoreline lots running all the way to the road. This divided into parcels much of the land south of the homestead cabins, of which about half sold.

It remains unclear who built the cabin on the tiny parcel near the mouth of the creek and when. As early as 1925, it was deserted. Fannie Hollingsworth, staying at Kelly’s Camp that summer while building her own cabin, Hollybourne, noted rowing over to visit the place.<sup>10</sup> Children growing up there in the 1930s at the head of the lake called it the “Haunted Cabin.” By that period, it had no windows or doors and was in an advanced state of deterioration.<sup>11</sup> At the time of his death, the cabin’s owner John Robinson owned 477.28 acres in Townships 31 and 32 as well as the lakefront parcel in Township 33. Robinson’s widow, Leslie, signed a contract with the federal government to sell all of it—including the lakefront lot valued at \$700—in January 1939.<sup>12</sup> No improvements, e.g. buildings, were noted on the lot, as they were on other lots in the report, and its price of less than \$10 per lake foot suggests that the park service did not consider buildings on the site to have any value. By the mid-1920s, building lots were selling for \$10 per lake foot; a cabin would have raised the value. Lydia Comeau noted in 1931 that the government was paying as much as \$20 per lake foot<sup>13</sup> although such high figures may have been for property with commercial potential. Leslie Robinson’s contract with the government listed other Robinson property within the

<sup>3</sup> *Book of Deeds 107/63*. 3 August 1905.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Eckelberry, *Down Memory Lane in the Flathead* (Kalispell, Montana: Thomas Printing, Inc., n.d.): 20.

<sup>5</sup> Lydia Comeau to L.O. Vaught, 24 April 1931. L.O. Vaught Papers, Box 2, Folder 9. (GNPA)

<sup>6</sup> Richard Fox, Interview with author, 31 July 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Lydia Comeau to L.O. Vaught, 4 March 1931. L.O. Vaught Papers, Box 2, Folder 9. (GNPA)

<sup>8</sup> *Book of Deeds 103/499*.

<sup>9</sup> *Plat Book for Section 14, Township 33 West, Range 18 North*. (Plat Room, Flathead County, Kalispell, Montana)

<sup>10</sup> Fannie Hollingsworth, 31 July 1925. *Journal for 1922-1926*. (Private collection)

<sup>11</sup> Marion Wheeler Scott, Interview with author, 21 July 2006. Taped for GNPA.

<sup>12</sup> Contract No.I-1p-15402, 27 January 1939 referenced in *General Report of the Investigation of 50 Per Cent Purchases of Private Lands in Glacier National Park* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Glacier National Park, 1940): 7.

<sup>13</sup> Lydia Comeau to L.O. Vaught, 21 March 1931. Vaught Papers.

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park, which the government did buy, but for unknown reasons, it did not buy the shoreline parcel.<sup>14</sup> Two years later, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 1941, John Robinson's heirs sold the property to O.M. Junkind.<sup>15</sup> Alice Beck acquired the lot sometime after that, and she sold the property, with a cabin, to Eugene and Luella Fox in 1950.<sup>16</sup>

This suggests that Alice Beck or O.M. Junkind renovated the cabin during the 1940s. Architecturally, this makes more sense as the cabin's notched corner log construction and daubed spaces are among the traditional rustic style building techniques of cabins built during the period 1895 until the Half Moon Fire of 1929. It retains the milled lumber window and door casings and factory sash and doors regularly used by builders throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The cabin's frontal gable form with the porch recessed under the extended lakeside roof is in the stylistic tradition of Lake McDonald recreational cabins built in the early period. In form, the single-block frontal gable Dora Crump Cabin built south of the Comeaus' homestead cabins by Edward Cruger about 1910 is the most similar, and it seems possible that Cruger, may also have built this cabin. The log kneewalls on the front porch resemble those on cabins he built for R.E. McDonnell northeast of the hotel. The roof extended over the recessed porch is a feature found at Kelly's Camp and also at both the guest cabins built for the hotel, and two early cabins on the Apgar lakeshore. All of these examples, in turn, drew inspiration from the Craftsman bungalows built in numerous new American neighborhoods in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Eugene Fox, grandfather of the current owner, lived near Chicago and first came to Glacier National Park in 1929 on a trip to visit this and other western parks. He thought Glacier was the most beautiful of all the places he visited, and he brought his family back for many summers, staying at the old Geduhn's resort in cabins managed by James Hindle. Richard Fox (b.1941), Eugene and Luella's son, does not remember a time when he did not spend summers here.<sup>17</sup> The Fox family's fourth generation is now using the cabin, which Eugene Fox enlarged for his family's use with a south wing and a back ell, both of matching height to the earlier log building. Both additions, however, are frame and use building materials that were relatively inexpensive at the time. Eugene Fox also convinced his brother, Clayton, and his wife, Harriet, to spend summers on Lake McDonald. They eventually bought the Henderson Cabin located in the Apgar Glacier Park Cottage Sites Subdivision at the south end of the lake in 1961. Richard Fox's daughter Julie Fox holds the deed on the Beck Cabin property.

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<sup>14</sup> *Plat Book, Section 14, Township 33 West, Range 18 North.*

<sup>15</sup> *Book of Deeds 167/244.* (Flathead County Clerk and Records Office, Kalispell, Montana)

<sup>16</sup> Richard Fox, Interview by author. 31 July 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Fox. Interview with author. 31 July 2005.

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

See continuation pages

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_**Primary Location of Additional Data:** State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency: Glacier National Park Archives Local government University Other – National Archives, Denver**10. Geographical Data****Acreeage of Property:** .172 acres (75 x 100 ft.)

<b>UTM References:</b> (NAD27)	<b>Zone</b>	<b>Easting</b>	<b>Northing</b>
	12	288687	5390163

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary encompasses the lot occupied by the Alice Beck Cabin. This 75 x 100-foot parcel is located on the east shore of Lake McDonald south of McDonald Creek and at the end of a right-of-way off of Kelly's Camp Road. It is designated parcel 2C in the plat book for Section 14, Township 33 West, Range 18 North.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary is drawn to encompass the 75 x 100-foot lot divided from the Comeau homestead by Denis and Lydia Comeau and sold to John T. Robinson in 1905.

**11. Form Prepared By****name/title:** Jessie A. Ravage**organization:****street & number:** 34 Delaware Street**city or town:** Cooperstown**date:** 10 February 2006**telephone:** 607.547-9507**state:** New York**zip code:** 13326**Additional Documentation**

See continuation pages, photographs, and maps

**Property Owner****name/title:** Julie Fox**street & number:** 14359 S. Elizabeth Lane**city or town:** Homer Glen **state:** Illinois**telephone:****zip code:** 60491

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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Sources

Buchholz, C. W. *Man in Glacier*. West Glacier, Montana: Glacier Natural History Association. 1976. 3<sup>rd</sup> printing, 1999.

Eckelberry, Henry. *Down Memory Lane in the Flathead*. Kalispell, Montana: Thomas Printing, Inc., n.d.

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*General Report of the Investigation of 50 Per Cent Purchases of Private Lands in Glacier National Park*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Glacier National Park, 1940. (Glacier National Park Archives (GNPA): West Glacier, Montana)

Harrington, Leona, *et al.* *History of Apgar*. [n.p., n.d.]. (GPNA)

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McDonald, James R. *Historic Structures Survey*. Glacier National Park. 1980.

*Plat Book for Section 14, Township 33 West, Range 18 North*. Plat Room. (Flathead County Courthouse, Kalispell, Montana)

Powell, Thelma. Interview with author. 24 July 2005.

Vaught, L.O. *History of Glacier*. Unpublished manuscript. n.d. (GPNA)

Vaught Papers. Correspondence from Lydia Comeau, Box 2, Folder 9. (GPNA)



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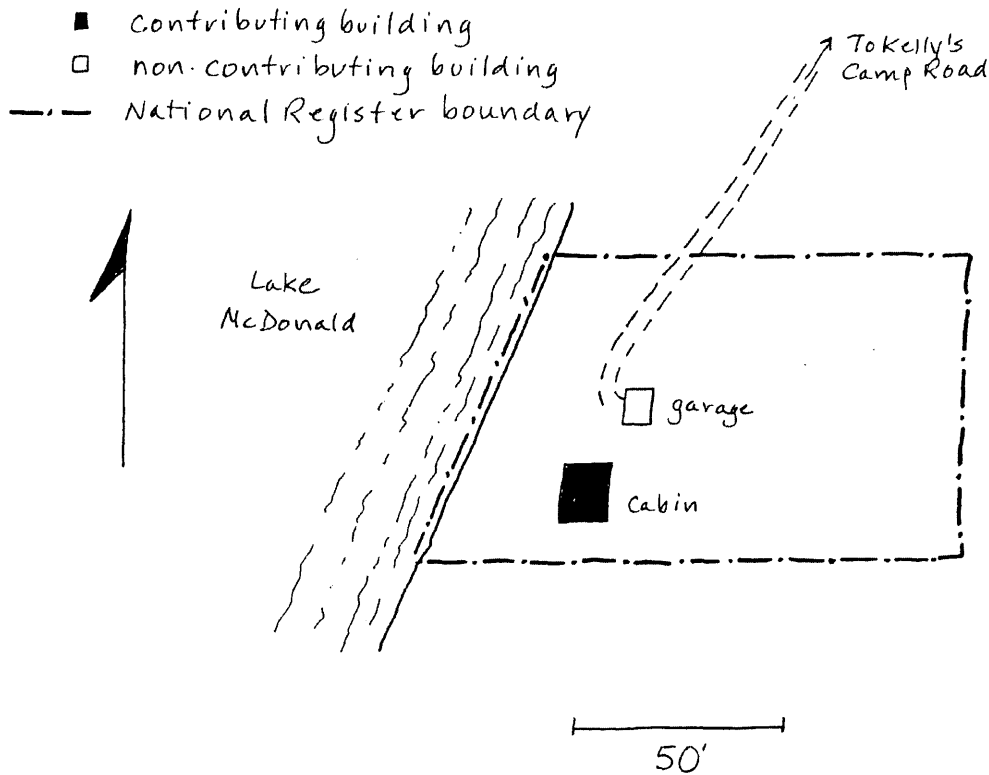
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# ALICE BECK CABIN

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11. Additional Documentation

**Photographs**

The following information applies to all photographs listed below:

Photographer: Jessie Ravage

Date of photograph: July 2005

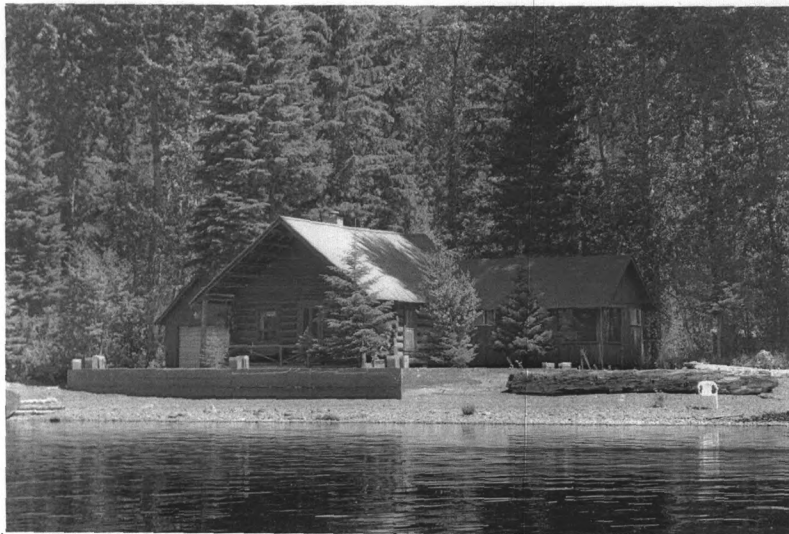
Location of negative: Glacier National Park Archives

**Alice Beck Cabin**

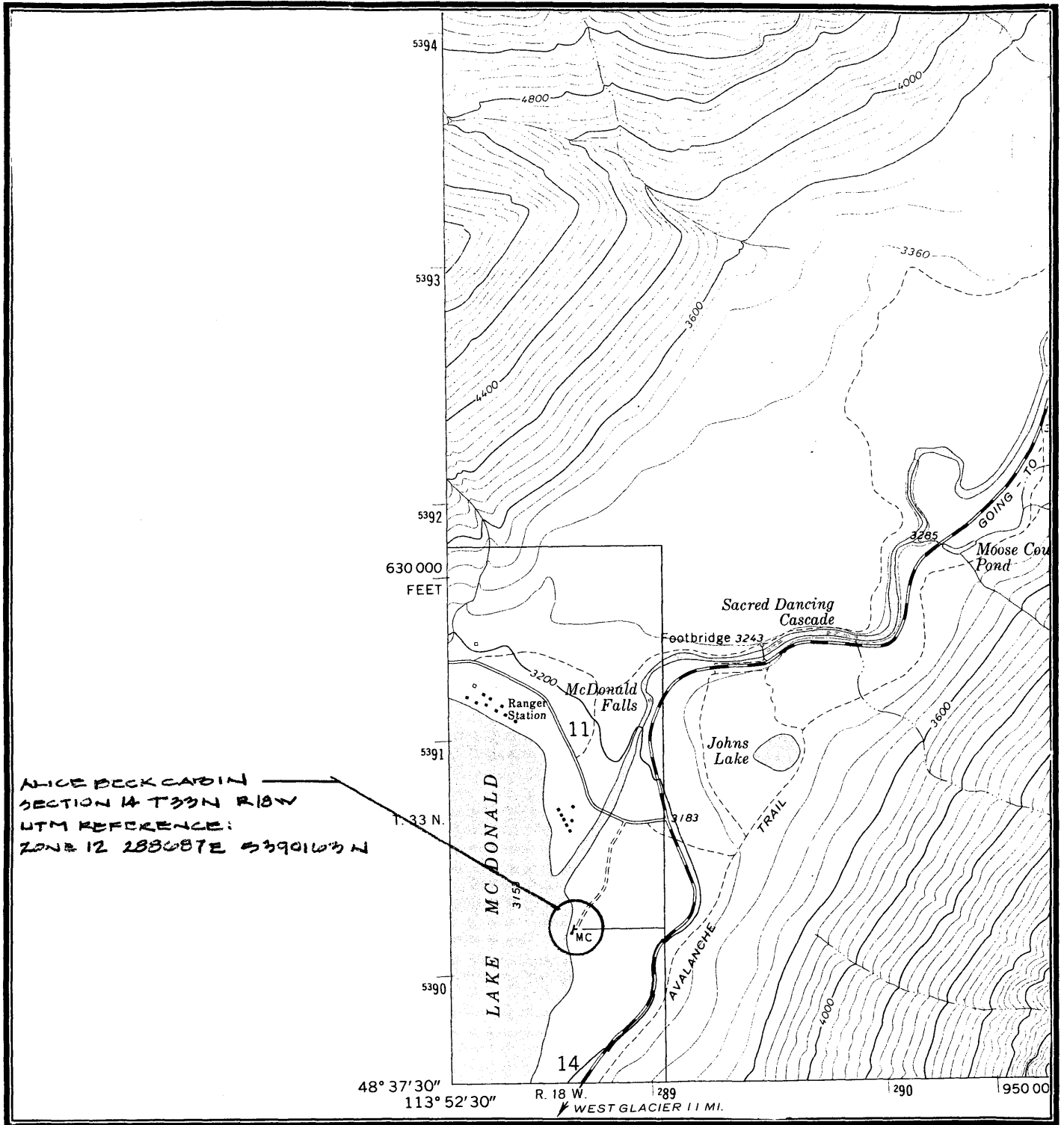
Flathead County, Montana

View of Alice Beck Cabin from Lake McDonald showing southwest elevation, or front

Photograph No.1



Alice Beck Cabin; Flathead Co, Montana; Jessie Ravage; July 2005; neg: Glacier National Park Archives;  
SW elevation of cabin from water; Photo No.1



Alice Beck Cabin  
 Recreational Camps on Lake McDonald MPD  
 Flathead County, MT  
 UTM's (NAD 27): Zone 12, Easting 288687 Northing 5390163  
 Section 14, Township 33 West, Range 18 North (Montana Prime Meridian)  
 Mount Cannon Quadrangle